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GEOPOLITICAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE EUROPEAN NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICY

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Introductory remarks

The European Neighbourhood Policy is a part of the EU's most recent foreign policy efforts aimed at strengthening its security with respect to the new neighbouring countries resulting from enlargement.² While enlargement is a proximate motivation for the ENP, the policy's roots are set down in the "European Security Strategy", which points out that "[e]ven in an era of globalisation, geography is still important. It is in the European interest that countries on our borders are well-governed."³

No country adjoining the EU territory can be regarded as a military threat today. However, there are domestic and inter-state conflicts in the adjacent region that could spill over into the Union. Furthermore, more often than not, these countries play a crucial role in the many fields that use to be the object of "soft" security: illegal trafficking of various kinds, organised crime, terrorism, abuse of the environment etc. Hence the EU's interest that they be well governed and included in a solid international co-operative framework.

The EU presents the ENP as a considerable extension of the opportunities for inclusion already offered the countries concerned. The new policy would give the neighbouring countries decidedly closer relations with the EU compared with non-neighbouring countries, including the chance to integrate further economically in the vast EU market so as to achieve the four fundamental freedoms of movement – persons, goods, services, and capital – in the long term. Technically, they are being offered a status very similar to the European Economic Area (EEA).

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² On the ENP, see Erwan Lannon, Peter van Elsuwege, "The EU's emerging neighbourhood policy", in Peter G. Xuereb (ed.), *Euro-Med Integration and the Ring of Friends*, European Documentation and Research Centre, University of Malta, Malta, pp. 21-84. The following are the most important documents from the EU on the ENP: Communication from the Commission, *European Neighbourhood Policy Strategy Paper*, Brussels 12 May 2004, COM (2004) 373 final; see previous documents: Commission of the European Communities, Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament, *Wider Europe - Neighbourhood: A New Framework for Relations with our Eastern and Southern Neighbours*, Brussels 11 March 2003, COM (2003) 104 final; Commission of the European Communities, Communication from the Commission, *Paving the way for a New Neighbourhood Instrument*, Brussels, 1 July 2003, COM(2003) 393 final; see also European Parliament, *Report on "Wider Europe-Neighbourhood: A New Framework for Relations with our Eastern and Southern Neighbours"*, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security and Defence Policy, Rapporteur: Pasqualina Napoletano, 5 November 2003 (Final A5-0378/2003).

³ *A Secure Europe in a Better World. European Security Strategy*, Brussels, 12 December 2003; the document is available in the web site of the EU Secretary General/High Representative for the CFSP.

As in previous EU initiatives of regional and inter-regional co-operation, economic integration is linked to the achievement of political and economic reforms based on such supposedly shared values as democracy and respect for human rights. Greater integration into a huge area of co-prosperity is the inducement offered neighbouring countries, which are thus expected to reform to bring about domestic structural stability, international economic integration and peaceful inter-state relations. In the regions adjoining Europe, the ENP updates and upgrades the conflict prevention endeavours already embedded in the EU's overall policy agenda.

The ENP can be considered from various points of view. It can be regarded as a new development in the Union's common foreign and security policy (CFSP): how will the ENP impact on the CFSP and how will CFSP shape it? Another angle is whether the ENP fits into the EU's external aims and finalities: will ENP, as an instrument, be more adequate and effective than previous policies in achieving the Union's objectives in external relations?

However, this paper focuses on ENP from a geopolitical point of view: what are the expected geopolitical implications of ENP implementation?

The EU's policy towards its neighbourhood will have not only regional but also global geopolitical implications. This paper considers both of them, starting from the regional and going on to the global.

What is new about the ENP from a geopolitical point of view is that the two distinctive regions encompassed by the initiative, that is the Eastern European and the Mediterranean areas, are brought into the same policy framework. While regarding these areas as a single geopolitical arc may definitely make sense in a broader perspective, the EU should not overlook that this arc comprises very different political, cultural and socio-economic realities, not only on a country-by-country but also on a regional and sub-regional basis. This means that implications may be global, regional and even sub-regional, where sub-regions may either lie wholly within the arc of neighbours or straddle it.

In the conclusions taken by the 17 June 2004 EU Council in Brussels, the list of countries the ENP considers neighbours comprises Belarus, Moldova, Ukraine, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Libya, Morocco, Palestine, Syria, and Tunisia. The Council's final conclusions also acknowledged Russia's unwillingness to be included in the ENP - as previously planned by the EU - because it entails a conditionality that Moscow does not accept. Russia's relations with the EU will continue to be friendly and co-operative, but will be based on bilateral cooperation arrangements. Nonetheless Russia remains a neighbour, so that the EU will, in fact, have to pursue two neighbourhood policies and attune them to one another.

The paper discusses, first, a set of geopolitical implications stemming from the implementation of the ENP in the regional and global framework. It then draws a number of conclusions.

Regional implications

Implementation of ENP will produce three tiers of geopolitical implications: (a) more direct EU involvement in regional and local crises; (b) possible extensions of EU involvement; (c) fault-lines in the neighbourhood's framework – as defined by the EU – that is, continuities straddling the neighbourhood's border and discontinuities within its border.

Involvement in crises - The first kind of implication stems from the particularly strong and deep ties the ENP aims to establish with its neighbours. In fact, its objective is to increase considerably the level of economic integration as well as to upgrade the level of intergovernmental co-operation with regard to soft security issues, not to speak of the long-term goal of sharing fundamental political values with its neighbours, such as democracy, respect for human rights, protection of minorities and the rule of law.

As pointed out, the status offered by the EU to ENP countries will be very similar to that of the countries presently parties to the EEA, a status that excludes political integration but provides for full economic integration and a “decision-shaping” role in economic policies. This is what the President of the Commission, Mr. Prodi, meant by sharing “everything but institutions”. This intense and high level international integration makes any domestic and international crises affecting the neighbours especially relevant and significant for the EU as such crises, challenges and risks could either prevent attainment of the planned integration within the ENP or impinge more directly on EU security. The geopolitical nexus stems less from geography (proximity) than from politics (the level of integration offered by the EU with a view to enhancing its security). EU involvement stems from the political significance the EU gives to the neighbourhood.

While the possible impact on the EU of domestic crises in neighbouring countries is rather obvious, the impact of international tensions between ENP countries and other countries, in particular, their neighbours, is less so. But this impact could be significant. First of all, the domestic and international dimensions of crises affecting EU neighbours could easily be intertwined. Second, any impact stemming from EU neighbours and their neighbours would be related to and in tune with the high level of integration the ENP is supposed to create. For instance, the Western Sahara crisis had very little impact on Morocco's and Algeria's relations with the EU in the framework of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. It would have been more significant in the more intense integrative framework of the ENP. In a sense, the EU's policy towards its ring of neighbours brings it into contact with another ring of countries – those adjoining the EU neighbours – which could generate events the EU would be unable to ignore.

Broadly speaking, the ENP framework will result in greater involvement of the EU in (a) regional crises, such as the Arab-Israeli or Western Sahara disputes and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; (b) domestic crises (*coups d'état*, as in 1992 in Algeria, etc.); (c) domestic crises or conflicts linked to secessionist or irredentist developments, eventually related to the outer ring of neighbours - as in the case of Transdnistria (Moldova), Abkhazia and South Ossetia

(Georgia), Nagorno-Karabach (Armenia and Azerbaijan)⁴, the Kurds (Syria). The EU – or its members – are already involved in most of these crises, sometimes very deeply as in the case of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In a number of cases, such involvement may increase just because the ENP would bring the crises closer to the EU. In any case, with old and new acquaintances alike, the degree and quality of EU involvement will generally be upgraded. Integration will provide structural stability in the long run, but in the meantime, it will bring instabilities closer to the EU.

Thus, the most obvious geopolitical effect of the ENP will be expanded political involvement for the EU, which would face an alternative between acting effectively to defuse crises and solve conflicts in the political co-sphere it wants to control and stabilise for the sake of its own security, or looking on as the co-sphere weakens and its security is enfeebled. In order to succeed, the EU will seriously have to reinforce its CFSP and ESDP. The Commission holds that the ENP will provide an important contribution to “further advancing and supporting the EU’s foreign policy objectives”⁵. However, this will only be possible if the CFSP is strengthened in turn. While the long-term effect of successfully integrating the neighbourhood would structurally help prevent conflicts, in the short- to medium-term EU conflict prevention and management capabilities will have to be seriously strengthened and widened. The importance of this challenge does not seem to be fully realised in the EU. If the economic dimension of the ENP is not complemented by an effective political and military dimension, the EU’s new geopolitical initiative could backfire: it could diminish rather than increase EU security.

Turkey - At the time of writing, it appears that the EU will very likely start membership negotiations with Turkey in 2005. They are forecast to be rather long. Thus, Turkey’s status will be similar to that of a neighbour for some time to come. Were negotiations to fail,⁶ Turkey would remain a neighbour (unless this caused a nationalistic reaction and Ankara, like Moscow, rejected the “unequal” status – *octroyé* – provided by the ENP). In this transient or definitive status of neighbour, Turkey would pose the same challenges for the EU as those discussed in the previous section: the deepening of an already high degree of economic integration will have to combine with strong EU political efforts to enable Turkey to keep up the pace of reform domestically and to respond to international conflicts co-operatively.

If Turkey should become a EU member, as most analysts point out, Iran and Iraq would as a result fall into the EU neighbour category.⁷ True, there are no automatic mechanisms in the

⁴ See Dov Lynch (ed.), *The South Caucasus: A Challenge for the EU*, ISS/WEU, Chaillot Paper No. 65, December 2003; The European Parliament has discussed a report on South Caucasus by Hon. Per Gahrton in February 2004 (See document A5-0052/2004 final).

⁵ Communication from the Commission, *European Neighbourhood Policy Strategy Paper*, cit., p. 8.

⁶ The consequences of Turkey’s non-accession are discussed in detail by Tobias Schumacher, “Dance In - Walk Out: Turkey, EU Membership and the Future of the Barcelona Process”, in A. Evin, N. Tocci (eds.), *Towards Accession Negotiations: Turkey’s Domestic and Foreign Policy Challenges Ahead*, Florence, RSCAS Press, 2004, forthcoming.

⁷ See Tobias Schumacher, cit.; F. Stephen Larrabee, Ian O. Lesser, *Turkish Foreign Policy in an Age of Uncertainty*, Rand, Santa Monica (CA), 2003, chapter 6.

ENP; it would be up to the EU to include Iraq and/or Iran in the ENP and at the end of the day, this inclusion could be omitted. But it is also true that, the EU being an entity more tied to values than to politics, it tends to prop up its identity by preferring systemic approaches. This preference would push for inclusion. However, this may hold more for the Commission and maybe the European Parliament than the Council, which would certainly moderate any systemic temptation of the sort. The question would certainly be tabled, however, and the response would not be easy.

If the EU were to take Iran and Iraq into consideration for neighbourhood status, there is no doubt that this would demand a qualitative change in its geopolitical stance. It would have to be very careful in trespassing this very “oriental” threshold. The question relates not only to the complexities and hardships of these two countries. The inclusion of Iran and Iraq would turn EU proximity from a regional into a global policy framework. Would the EU be prepared to take such a jump? Here again, EU cohesion in the CFSP does not seem sufficient. It will be a hard enough task to run a regional neighbourhood, yet the EU could try and might even succeed in reinforcing its CFSP by putting it to the test in a regional dimension. But running a globalising neighbourhood could be very difficult and the EU could get hurt.

This is not to exclude application of the neighbourhood concept to countries as far away as Iran and Iraq. Yet, the CFSP must contemplate at least four conditions for such enlargement to become feasible. First, there should be a common EU security approach to the Gulf region and the broader Middle Eastern area (going well beyond the present sluggish trade agreement with the GCC). Second, in the framework of a common EU security policy towards the Gulf region, structured co-operation with the United States would be badly needed. Third, the EU as a whole would have to be more influential in UN Security Council decision-making than is presently the case or envisaged for the future with individual EU members in the Council. Fourth, the present EU focus on the Mediterranean must be replaced by a more articulated policy towards an enlarged Middle Eastern and North African area. If the EU were unable to achieve these conditions, it would do better to stop at Turkey and put aside any idea of enlarging ENP to Iran and Iraq.

Israel - The third tier of ENP implications regards cases of geopolitical fractures within the planned ring of neighbours or, vice versa, continuities between neighbours and countries outside the ring. Discontinuities relate to Israel, Libya and Azerbaijan-Armenia relations; continuities to the Arab countries.

Pending solution of the conflicts involving Israel, Syria, Lebanon, and the Palestinians, the ring of EU neighbours includes an Israeli-Arab fracture, which is a security risk in itself. Furthermore, it hinders or even denies EU the ability to manage the relations with the actors of the region. For this reason, eliminating or attenuating such discontinuity remains a major issue in the EU neighbourhood policy.

In the 1990s, the EU thought the Barcelona process (the Euro-Mediterranean Policy - EMP) could combine with the Middle East peace process to help overcome the Arab-Israeli

fracture. The EMP in itself was not supposed to lead to peace; its task was to facilitate the peace process by establishing a situation of structured co-operation and integration in the region. The failure of the peace process has left Israelis and Arabs in the same EMP house, yet decidedly separated in a very rigid “hub and spokes” pattern of relations. There are relations between Israel and Brussels as well as between the Arab countries and Brussels, but no relations between Israel and the Arab countries. Furthermore, the EMP mechanisms of political co-operation are not really working (although this question goes beyond the Arab-Israeli discontinuity).

While the EMP as an option aimed at integrating Israel and Arabs is gone, the more pragmatic ENP⁸ could now emerge as a helpful compromise solution. Actually, the EMP will survive as a regional articulation of the ENP, but application of the latter – by emphasising “differentiation” – will sideline collective relations and, in contrast, reinforce bilateral ones between the EU and its neighbours. With its bilateral and differentiated focus in a looser collective policy framework than the EMP, the ENP will make it possible to reinforce Israel’s relations with the EU. At the same time, the relations between Israel and the Mediterranean Arab countries encompassed in the EMP/ENP will be trivialised without necessarily being interrupted or broken.

A couple of years ago, before the ENP had been launched, Alfred Tovias⁹ wrote about possible Israeli affiliation to the European Economic Area. This option is now emerging in the form of the ENP. As already underscored, the ENP is similar to the EEA. Israel could either seek to become a member of the EEA proper or develop its relations within the ENP alongside the Mediterranean Arab countries. In any case, the processes would be highly differentiated and would not interfere with one another. As just pointed out, this would allow for a loose cohabitation within the ENP and the EMP.

Would this be a satisfactory solution? Only partially. No doubt, the Arab-Israeli discontinuity in the EU neighbourhood would be made more flexible and sustainable. But it would not disappear. This creates problems for the EU and the ENP. For, although it is true that in principle the Arab countries and Israel will have the same status and opportunities within the ENP, there can be no doubt that while Arab countries are not ready to grasp ENP opportunities, Israel is. This difference will not be offset by any collective or multilateral context. Thus it will single out the EU-Israel relationship in Arab eyes and confirm in their minds a negative geopolitical vision in which Israel is anything but an intruding appendix of the Western world and Arab-European and -Western relations are inherently governed by a fault-line.

On the other hand, after the events that led to the 2000 Camp David failure, no alternative is in sight. Even if a way out of the ongoing violent conflict were to emerge in the next months or

⁸ Elisabeth Johansson-Nogués, “A ‘Ring of Friends’? The Implications of the European Neighbourhood Policy for the Mediterranean”, *Mediterranean Politics*, Vol. 9, No. 2, Summer 2004, pp. 240-247.

⁹ Alfred Tovias, *Mapping Israel’s Policy Options Regarding Its Future Institutionalised Relations with the European Union*, CEPS Working Paper No. 3, Brussels, January 2003; also: Raffaella Del Sarto, Alfred Tovias, “Caught between Europe and the Orient: Israel and the EMP”, *The International Spectator*, Vol. 36, No. 4, 2001, pp. 61-75.

years, it's hard to imagine any kind of arrangement that would bring about the conditions for some form of integration between Israel and its Arab neighbours in the short- to mid-term. From the EU point of view, there will be no better solution for a long while than the second-best solution the ENP is going to provide. The discontinuity will stay, although the ENP umbrella could allow for some wise balancing acts between differentiation and cohabitation so as to prevent a conflict-laden geopolitical vision from prevailing and governance from becoming impossible.

In addition to the notion of deeper EU-Israel economic integration within the wider circle of the ENP, several authors like Tovias and opinion groups in Israel, Europe and the diaspora are promoting the idea of Israeli membership in the EU. While mainstream EU thinking regarding the peaceful settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict is predicated on considering Israel a Middle Eastern country and fostering its integration with its Middle Eastern neighbours, the thinking of those who promote Israeli membership in the EU is predicated on the belief that the inclusion of Israel in the EU would oblige the parties to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to abide by the Copenhagen principles and, by the same token, seek a peaceful settlement, according to the logic that has worked more or less in Central-Eastern Europe. Furthermore, it is also predicated on a vision of Israel as a society substantially based on Western and European values even though it is non-European *per se*, like Turkey.

Can EU enlargement to eastern Europe be compared to the suggested enlargement to the Near East? Can Turkey-EU relations be compared to Israel-EU relations? Answer to these questions will not even be attempted. All that's worth noting here is that, irrespective of other considerations, Israel's inclusion in the EU, especially if it were to come after Turkey's inclusion, would definitively confirm the perception of an EU-Arab fault-line – something the EU has so far very wisely opposed and kept aloof of. If such a perception were consolidated, it would be another step towards an otherwise non-existent “clash of civilisations”.

Libya – Libya can be seen as a case of gap within the EMP and the ENP, essentially because Mediterranean Arabs and Europeans alike perceive its absence as a weakness in the fabric of shared security relations across the Mediterranean. For this reason, Libya was given observer status in the EMP and the door was left open for accession. But Libya, while appreciating and holding onto its observer status, did not accept membership in the EMP for various reasons. Whether it would agree to take part in the ENP is not known. The EU will very likely not want to extend the ENP to Libya unless it agrees to enter the EMP. Otherwise, its accession could create problems for the political credibility of the ENP, as well as for relations within the EMP.

One should not overlook, in fact, that Libya's refusal to enter the EMP also reflects a discontinuity in inter-Arab relations. Libya has explained its refusal to enter the EMP, for the time being, in two ways: (a) it perceives itself primarily as an African – rather than Arab – country and wishes to develop relations, first of all, with sub-Saharan Africa; and (b) it does not accept the shared EMP perspective on the need to contribute to a settlement between Israel and the Palestinians. Both reflect Qaddafi's strong disappointment with what he perceives as the Arab regimes' incompetence with, if not betrayal of, the Arab cause.

There is no doubt that including Libya in a wider collective framework of co-operation, such as the EMP, makes sense. Furthermore, the country is making substantive steps to reject its dubious past and adopt an internationally co-operative stance. Nevertheless, its reasons for not accepting inclusion in the EMP and the absence of any talk whatsoever on reform of its grossly authoritarian regime¹⁰ begs caution and gradualism.

Libya's problematic case, like that of Israel, does not compromise the implementation and geopolitics of the ENP. It is also not particularly problematic – at least as long as it is managed in a co-operative way by the EU and its Arab partners – for the door to remain open towards Tripoli. Indeed, the case has to be handled wisely and without haste.

Armenia-Azerbaijan - These two countries, as is well known, confront each other in a number of conflicts, the most important of which is the territorial conflict in Nagorno-Karabach. There is no need to enter here into the substance of these conflicts. It should only be noted that the EU could take advantage of both countries' strong interest in the significant inclusion offered by the ENP to make it conditional on a kind of stability pact between Baku and Erevan¹¹. Unlike its relative impotence in the Israeli-Arab conflict, Europe appears to be better positioned here to exert pressure for a settlement. Otherwise, the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflicts may constitute a serious discontinuity in the application of the ENP and hinder its achievement.

One important geopolitical aspect relating to Armenia and Azerbaijan in the ENP perspective is the role of Turkey. Certainly, this role concerns the southern Caucasus area as a whole. However, because of the alliance between Turks and Azeris, it concerns the Azerbaijan-Armenia relationship in particular. Whether Turkey remains a neighbour or becomes a member of the EU, there is a strong link between EU-Turkey relations and the role Turkey can play with respect to this conflict and this area. The EU should be able to expect from Turkey a collaborative, constructive and peaceful role.

The Arab countries – There already is a drift within the ENP/EMP towards separate EU relations with Israel, on the one hand, and with the Mediterranean Arab countries, on the other. The EU "European Security Strategy" says *en passant*, "A broader engagement with the Arab World should also be considered". Bichara Khader¹² recently advocated a special link between the EU and the Arab world, which would obviously be shaped by the new strategic and geopolitical situation in the Mediterranean and beyond, not necessarily by the model of the defunct Euro-Arab Dialogue. In this Euro-Arab perspective, the important

¹⁰ Isabelle Werenfels, "How to Deal with the 'New Qaddafi'?", *SWP Comment*, No. 29, Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik – German Institute for International and Security Affairs, Berlin, October 2004; Michele Dunne, "Libya: Security is Not Enough", *Policy Brief*, No. 32, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Washington D.C., October 2004. Both contributions point out the irony of the West risking to trade security (WMD and terrorism) against the regime's stability.

¹¹ See the Gahrton report.

¹² Bichara Khader, "Partenariat Euro-Méditerranéen ou Partenariat Euro-Arabe. Perceptions et Propositions", *Diálogo Mediterráneo*, No. 34, Septiembre 2004, pp. 10-13.

geopolitical issue is the continuity between the Mediterranean and the Middle East – or the broader Middle East – across the boundary the ENP draws. Should the EU maintain a Euro-Med relationship or should it expand that relationship towards the Gulf and perhaps even beyond? The response by Neugart and Schumacher¹³ is that the EU should emerge from its entrenchment in the Mediterranean and move towards a Euro-Mediterranean and Middle East Partnership (EMEP).

The official European response is more cautious (even from the countries taking part in the Iraq coalition). Many Europeans have felt the transatlantic cleavages triggered by the US' Greater Middle East Initiative as an American threat to the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. This feeling has generated such staunch defence of the EMP that it has, in the end, killed all chances of a healthy debate on what the EU should do in the Gulf. The 17-18 June 2004 European Council in Brussels endorsed an "EU Strategic Partnership with the Mediterranean and the Middle East",¹⁴ explaining that the patchwork of very differentiated policies the EU is conducting towards MENA areas and countries (EMP, agreements with the GCC, Yemen and Iran) could certainly be improved but that it nonetheless constitutes, as it stands, more or less the right EU response to the broader Middle East region. At the root of this very conservative attitude (a response to the United States rather than to the broader Middle East issue) is France. As always in the EU, the members with a global projection (and perhaps those willing to go global) are wary of any expansion of the EU's Middle Eastern projection because this would entail a stronger CFSP and, hence, some surrender of their global power to the Union.

Starting a march towards the EMEP at a time when the ENP is just emerging and the EMP is in transition could be premature. Most Mediterranean Arab countries, above all those in the Maghreb, would not be happy with the idea of sharing their EU relations with the Gulf Arab nations and Iran. It is not by chance that the idea of a distinct EU Maghrebi policy with respect to more oriental EU relations is being aired again. Furthermore, too early an attempt to develop a new comprehensive EU-Arab relationship could make it more difficult to keep EU-Israeli and Israeli-Arab relations quietly separated in the EMP until some new peaceful kind of prospective relationship emerges.

At the same time, however, the idea of expanding EU policies to the Gulf and the broader Middle East reflects a significant truth and is a direction the EU should be concerned about and eager to explore. The geopolitics of the Mediterranean is a narrow and somehow artificial framework that does not echo strategic realities. An opening towards the Gulf and the broader Middle East could help the EU develop its "actorness" or help such "actorness" mature, if and when it were to develop.

¹³ Felix Neugart, Tobias Schumacher, "Thinking about the EU's Future Neighbourhood Policy in the Middle East: From the Barcelona Process to a Euro-Middle East Partnership", in C.-P. Hanelt, G. Luciani, F. Neugart (eds.), *Regime Change in Iraq*, Florence, RSCAS Press, 2004, pp. 169-92.

¹⁴ For document see *Euro-Med Report*, No 78, 23 June 2004.

All in all, the EU should look at the Gulf and try to integrate an “oriental” policy that extends beyond the Mediterranean. But this must be done gradually and wisely. It could be carried out as an expansion of either the EMP or the ENP. The case of ENP expansion towards the Gulf has already been discussed with regard to the possible consequences of EU enlargement to Turkey. The case of an expansion under the EMP umbrella is similar: (a) a more cohesive CFSP would be needed, especially with regard to the United Nations, and (b) a more cohesive transatlantic policy would be required as well. Broadly speaking, any expansion of an EU “oriental” policy towards the Gulf, whether via Turkey, the ENP or the EMP, means a globalisation of the policy and consequently requires a congruous transatlantic policy.

Beside EMP continuity towards the Gulf and the Middle East, a second relevant question is whether the EMP would preserve a degree of cohesion or whether fragmentation would prevail as a consequence of “differentiation”. When discussing the ENP’s impact on Israel, this paper pointed out its tendency to weaken the EMP, thereby allowing for separate EU-Israel and EU-Arabs relations and loose Israeli-Arab cohabitation. This weakening stems essentially from differentiation stemming from ENP’s application within the EMP framework. One can also expect considerable differentiation in relations between the EU and the individual EMP Arab countries, both on economic and political grounds, thus bringing about further EMP fragmentation. However, forms of “reinforced co-operation”¹⁵ could also emerge. Actually, such co-operation already exists, for instance, through the Agadir Pact. Within the new context, “reinforced co-operation” could be fostered by the emergence of some forms of sub-regionalism, as in the case of the Maghreb, or the emergence of EU-Arab or inter-Arab cluster targeting, for instance, joint peace support operations or conflict prevention actions.

The possibility of special EU-Arab cohesion in the Arab branch of the EMP could perhaps be strengthened by expanding the EMP into an EMEP, although the dynamics of inter-Arab relations could make such a development questionable.

Beyond the regional sphere

The ENP will have implications beyond the regional sphere, that is beyond the inner and outer rings of neighbours. These implications are of a more or less global nature. This paper comments on three kinds of such “global” implications: (a) the impact of the ENP on EU relations with the Arab world; (b) the impact on relations between the EU and the Russian Federation; (c) the impact on transatlantic relations.

The Arab world – The Mediterranean Arab countries involved in the EMP have accepted the ENP for a number of good reasons. First, thanks to “differentiation”, the ENP brings flexibility into the collective framework of the EMP, in which they did not always feel at ease. Second,

¹⁵ Here the expression “reinforced co-operation” is used in the same sense as in the EU context, i.e. co-operation not necessarily involving all the members, thus allowing for opting outs. See Tobias Schumacher, “Riding on the Wind of Change: The Future of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership”, *The International Spectator* (Rome), No. 2, 2004, pp. 89-102

the ENP introduces co-ownership in their relations with the EU. Co-ownership means more commitment once a joint decision is made, yet less so when it comes to taking common decisions: in fact, the principle of ownership makes the partners fully free to adopt or reject commitments. That said, the Mediterranean Arab countries should understand that, while the ENP eases their commitments in the EMP, by the same token it tends to loosen their political relationship with the EU. For this reason, whether consciously or not, the Arab partners perceive the ENP as a manifestation of the Mediterranean's marginality as a result of EU enlargement.

Because of the loosening of the linkages between Arabs and Israelis entailed by the EMP's rules, the ENP is also going to be perceived by Arabs as a path towards normalisation between the EU and Israel. This might contribute to reinforcing Arab perceptions of marginality with respect to the Euro-Western circle.

In this perspective, the idea of developing a Euro-Arab partnership could be seen as a helpful solution. However, expanding the EU's special relationship to the whole of the Arab world would certainly not be to the Maghreb countries' advantage, nor would it be obviously acceptable to Egypt and the Arab countries in the Near East. No doubt, as pointed out by Neugart and Schumacher, this Euro-Arab circle would not be a uniform entity and would take the shape of a set of concentric circles. Still, Mediterranean Arabs would only accept any EU attempts to enlarge the EMP eastwards very reluctantly. Furthermore, their national policies towards Europe would be constrained by inter-Arab factors.

Whether a Euro-Arab partnership will develop or not, it remains that the ENP, as a dimension of EU enlargement, triggers feelings of marginality and exclusion with respect to Europe. This sense of exclusion, insecurity and frustration would increase if Turkey were to become a member of the EU (not to speak of Israel). Unless adequate confidence-building measures are taken towards the Arabs, the ENP and its implications could be the beginning of some geopolitical divergence or political estrangement between the EU and the Arabs.

The Russian Federation – The Russian Federation, as pointed out in the introductory remarks, has refused to have its relations with the EU shifted to the ENP framework. No doubt, the ENP, with its negative and positive mechanisms of conditionality and inclusion, is a framework in which the EU works not only as a “hub” but also as a political “hegemon”. Thus, the EU's interest in promoting democracy and welfare in the Russian Federation will have to be achieved by other, more traditional intergovernmental and international means. As we know, these means are not lacking, but they have to be strengthened and made more effective.

As already pointed out, the ENP will bring about a degree of EU political responsibility in preventing, managing and solving crises within the ring of neighbours and at the boundaries of the ring. In this perspective, the two “near abroad” policies - of Russia and the EU - may clash. In the eastern part of the EU's arc of neighbouring countries, the Russian Federation is heavily involved in most crises, from Transdnistria to the northern Caucasus; by the same

token, Russian relations with Belarus and Ukraine may not always be in tune with EU interests and goals.

In other words, the EU's initiative of implementing a neighbourhood policy involves the Union in a number of crises that involve Russia as well. This makes EU-Russia cleavages more likely. The EU must take this possible consequence of the neighbourhood policy into careful consideration. The instruments for good relations and co-operation that the EU and Russia have developed outside of the ENP framework must be further developed and strengthened so as to prevent disputes and contribute to tackling and solving crises before they become factors of conflict between the two actors.

One cannot say whether including Russia in the ENP would have facilitated relations and helped defuse the crises just mentioned. The question is not that Russia stands outside the ENP, rather that the EU is now on Russia's borders in a number of contentious flash points that could give way to disputes. For this reason, EU-Russia bilateral relations and international co-operation need to be strengthened with a view to preventing conflicts and other disputes.

One significant aspect in preventing the ENP from becoming a factor of conflict between the EU and Russia could be future regional economic co-operation around the Black Sea.¹⁶ In contrast to what has happened so far, the EU should help strengthen the BSEC (Black Sea Economic Co-Operation) organisation (as planned by the Commission's strategy paper on the ENP). Strengthening the BSEC requires an ENP mechanism to encourage endeavours of regional co-operation not only within the ENP framework but also astride its borders (as is the case with the BSEC). By the way, the same holds true for the Arab world, even though current pan-Arab regional projects of economic integration astride the ENP borders vs. projects inside the ENP borders (the pan-Arab free trade area vs. the Agadir Pact) seem less operational and effective than the BSEC (which is not that effective itself).

Co-operation in the BSEC would also promote co-operation between Russia and Turkey. Co-operation between these two countries is an important factor in the framework of EU-Russia co-operation. Turkey's possible entry into the EU could give way to negative geopolitical views in Russia. Fostering co-operation between Turkey and Russia in the framework of the wider relations between Russia and the EU would help prevent such negative views.

All in all, stronger EU-Russia co-operation is a fundamental factor for success of the ENP, in particular on the eastern side of the EU's neighbourhood.

The United States and transatlantic relations - The ENP does not significantly interfere with transatlantic relations. However, as already noted, it may cut across transatlantic relations because of the upgraded EU involvement in crisis management and conflicts it can be expected to bring about. In particular, this concerns the Arab-Israeli conflict, although differences cannot

¹⁶ Mustafa Aydin, *Europe's Next Shore: The Black Sea Region after EU Enlargement*, ISS/WEU, Occasional paper No. 53, June 2004.

be excluded in other crises in both the Eastern European and Middle Eastern branches of the ENP arc.

As already mentioned, the need for a co-operative transatlantic framework would become especially relevant if the ENP were to expand from the Mediterranean to the Gulf. The inclusion of Turkey in the EU and its consequences on the ring of EU neighbours could also impact on the United States. Some people in the United States are already looking at Turkey's possible inclusion in the EU as a process of "Europeanisation" which would set in motion strategic and political differences in Turkey-US relations.¹⁷

This perspective, however, is not strictly related to the ENP. Yet, it is worth noting that Turkey's inclusion in the EU is, from a global point of view, the most significant geopolitical factor in the EU's current evolution. A Turkey-inclusive EU may be perceived by Russia and the United States – as by Arabs – as less friendly and co-operative, more of a traditional power than a civil power. However, the geopolitical significance of a Turkey-inclusive EU also has to be assessed in terms of Turkey's impact on the cohesion and political identity of the EU. As Turkey's membership is likely to weaken that identity, the overall geopolitical impact on Russia, the United States, and the Arab world of a Turkey-inclusive EU would be minimal and more occasional than systemic.

It is true, however, that EU involvement in crises presently as distant as Kurdistan and the Upper Gulf would be increased by Turkey's membership and this development in itself would impinge on transatlantic relations (as well as EU-Russia and EU-Arabs relations).

Concluding remarks

The paper has taken into consideration a number of geopolitical scenarios relating to the implementation of the ENP by the European Union.

The basic scenario is the one established by the ENP policy, as worked out and approved by the EU institutions and accepted by candidate partners. If one takes into consideration that Russia has refused to be a party to the ENP and that the EU considers Belarus a potential party but wants to put off its inclusion while waiting for improvements in its extremely authoritarian regime, the basic scenario contemplates, for the time being, a neighbourhood comprising Ukraine and Moldova, Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan; Syria, Jordan, Egypt, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, the Palestinian National Authority and Israel. This scenario is affected by three discontinuities, each one requiring *ad hoc* responses by the ENP: Israel-

¹⁷ Ian Bremmer, "Would Turkey split the EU and U.S.?", *International Herald Tribune*, October 22, 2004 points out "Longer term, Turkey's inclusion in the EU causes real trouble for the United States, because it makes a permanent rift between Europe and the United States, along the lines seen recently over Iraq (where Turkey's position was already closer to Paris and Berlin than to Washington), much more likely. The addition of Turkey's armed forces makes a common European defense more feasible - which makes NATO less necessary". The official American view strongly supports the inclusion of Turkey in the EU (ultimately, within the framework of the Greater Middle East Initiative).

Arabs, Libya-EMP, Armenia-Azerbaijan. Furthermore, because of the Israeli-Arab conflicts and disputes, this scenario is also affected by the quality of transatlantic co-operation.

The second scenario contemplates the mutual adjustments between Russia's "near abroad" and the EU's neighbourhood. This scenario includes risks of cleavages and even conflict between the EU and the Russian Federation as well as opportunities for European-US co-operation either to foster EU-Russia co-operation or to oppose Russia (NATO and the OSCE should play a role here).

The third scenario regards the southern branch of the ENP, that is the EMP and its possible continuity towards the Gulf and the broader Middle East. In this scenario, the ENP's first task is to manage the cohabitation of Israel and the Arab partners. The overwhelming Arab segment of the EMP could (a) acquire an autonomous dynamic and (b) be expanded towards the Gulf, thus resulting in a new kind of Euro-Arab partnership.

The fourth scenario would be shaped by Turkey's entry into the EU. This scenario would require more EU attention to Russian and Arab reactions – likely to be negative, as might be to some extent those of the United States. This scenario would make the EMP's expansion into an EMEP more likely.

The fifth scenario refers to the United States. As pointed out in the paper, any expansion of the EU's "oriental" policy towards the Gulf, whether via Turkey, the ENP or the EMP, means a globalisation of such policy and, consequently, requires a congruous transatlantic policy.

Beside these scenarios, the paper's most important finding is that the quantum and quality of the EU involvement in the crises affecting the ENP partners will result generally upgraded. Integration will provide structural stability in the long run. Meanwhile, it will bring instabilities closer to the EU.

For this reason, in conclusion, the ENP's most obvious geopolitical effect will be expanded political involvement by the EU, which will face an alternative between acting effectively to defuse crises and solve conflicts in the political co-sphere it wishes to control and stabilise for the sake of its own security, and being witness to the weakening of that co-sphere and the enfeebling of its own security. Consequently, in order to succeed, the EU will seriously have to reinforce its CFSP as well as ESDP.